



spring in large congregations in flowing water over gravel and sandy bottoms. Females often deposit over 100,000 eggs. Incubation takes eight to 15 days.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

river carpsucker

Carpionodes carpio

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Family:	Cypriniformes
Order:	Catostomidae

Features

The river carpsucker is stout with a moderately flattened and slightly arched back. It has a nipple-like projection in the middle of its lower lip. The back is a brown-olive color with silvery sides fading to a whitish belly. The fins are opaque except in older fish.

Breeding males develop minute tubercles (bumps) about the body. The river carpsucker is the largest of the carpsuckers with adults commonly 12 to 18 inches long and weighing one to three pounds.

Natural History

The river carpsucker is abundant in nearly all large interior rivers, the Mississippi, and the Missouri River. It prefers large silty rivers with slower moving current over sand or silt bottoms, but also is found in smaller rivers and impoundments. River carpsuckers congregate in large schools and feed near the bottom on protozoans, small crustaceans, aquatic insects, aquatic worms, and mollusks. Adults mature at ages two and three, depending on sex. It spawns in late